April 8, 2019

Dear Chairman Nadler and Ranking Member Collins,

We write to share our concerns with you and members of the House Judiciary Committee regarding the April 9 hearing on Hate Crimes and The Rise of White Nationalism. We believe these are urgent issues and that Congress should be paying close attention, especially in light of the rise of hate crimes in the United States and the role that domestic white nationalist groups have here at home, and on a global scale.

Statement of Concern Regarding April 9 Congressional Hearing on Hate Crimes and White Nationalism.

On Tuesday, April 9, Congress is holding a hearing on hate violence and white nationalism. According to the announcement, the House Judiciary Committee plans to "examine hate crimes, the impact white nationalist groups have on American communities and the spread of white identity ideology." We believe these are urgent issues and that Congress should be paying close attention, especially in light of the rise of hate crimes in the United States and the role that domestic white nationalist groups have here at home, and on a global scale.

As organizations working with Muslim, South Asian, Sikh, and Arab communities, we are deeply aware of how hate violence has become a pervasive issue affecting our communities and other marginalized communities. We are heartened to know that the witness list for Tuesday's hearing includes Dr. Abu Salha whose two Muslim daughters and son-in-law were murdered in a brutal hate crime in Chapel Hill, North Carolina in 2015.

However, Tuesday's hearing fails to comprehensively address the scope and magnitude of hate violence that disproportionately impacts Black, Muslim, Sikh, South Asian, and Arab American communities. Nor does the hearing utilize an opportunity to unearth the complex motivations behind white nationalism or its effects, including hate violence. Apart from Dr. Abu Salha, it is not survivor-centered, and the GOP witness list includes several individuals whose actions and institutions have helped catalyze hate crimes, not abate them. For example, the witness list includes Candace Owens, Director of Communications at Turning Point USA, who tweeted "LOL" after the Christchurch massacre and who was listed as an inspiration in the manifesto released by the white supremacist who is responsible for the massacre of at least 50 Muslims in New Zealand. The list also includes Morton Klein, president of the Zionist Organization of America who used the slur "filthy Arabs" just last year. It is important that white nationalism and white supremacy are not treated as redeemable ideologies.

It is unfathomable as to why witnesses who espouse hateful positions and represent racist institutions would be included given their active discrimination against Muslims and Arabs. Additionally, the hearing does not thoroughly examine the various and dominant strands of white nationalism, including zionism; the connection between political rhetoric, state policies, and the rise in hate crimes; nor does it include survivors who experienced hate violence since the 2016

election; or government officials who should be held accountable for how federal agencies and law enforcement entities are actively addressing white nationalism and hate violence.

We demand that Congress hold substantive hearings that center survivors and that unequivocally reject white nationalism, white supremacy, Islamophobia, racism, and hate violence in all its forms. Similar Congressional hearings have fallen short of examining the depth of white supremacist hate violence and our communities continue to pay the price. The 2017 FBI hate crimes statistics revealed an increase in hate crimes for the third year in a row, a 17% increase from the prior year. This is an alarming upward trend in hate crimes – now consistently surpassing the spike immediately after September 11, 2001. Survivors of hate violence and bigotry deserve honest inquiries and true justice from their elected officials. Congress must hold subsequent hearings that comprehensively confront and address the proliferation of white supremacist and white nationalist hate violence.

Signed,

American - Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
Arab American Association of New York (AAANY)
Arab Resource and Organizing Center (AROC)
Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project (API DVRP)
DRUM - Desis Rising Up & Moving
HEART Women & Girls
Justice For Muslims Collective
Muslim Anti-Racism Collaborative
National Network for Arab American Communities (NNAAC)
National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA)
Sikh Coalition
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)
The Partnership For The Advancement of New Americans (PANA)
United We Dream